



International Indian Treaty Council

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Interactive Dialogue 4: Protecting our Planet and Combatting Climate Change
Presented by Roberto Múkaro Borrero (Taino), International Indian Treaty Council,
Indigenous Peoples Major Group

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Excellencies, Civil Society, the UN System and Indigenous Peoples, respectful greetings.

The Indigenous Peoples Major Group welcomes the final adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the UN General Assembly. Whereas the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) made no reference to us, the six references to Indigenous Peoples in this Agenda are a sign of progress; albeit a hard fought achievement.

Today, we are asked to comment on the proposal to limit global mean temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius. Indigenous Peoples cannot fully support this goal, keeping in mind that the Structured Expert Dialog (SED) report recently concluded that at 2 degrees of warming, "...indigenous people[s] would be at risk of loss of land and cultural and natural heritage, and cultural practices embedded in livelihoods would be disrupted."¹

The SDG's seek to end poverty and hunger in all their forms. However, the SED report demonstrates that the 2-degree goal will increase poverty and hunger among Indigenous Peoples. Our food sources, local economies, resilience, and survival are absolutely dependent on the health of the natural world.

We call upon States to adopt a more ambitious global goal limit of 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial average temperatures, and if possible even less.

In addition, there must be coherence among a climate change agreement under the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction, the SDGs, and international human rights standards.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted 8 years ago this month, is the minimum standard that must be fully respected, upheld and implemented to ensure that the world's development priorities do not put our life ways, traditional economics and livelihoods at continued risk. These include rights to our traditional lands, territories and resources, cultural heritage, means of subsistence, free prior and informed consent and participation in decision making which affects us, among others.

In closing, Indigenous Peoples must continue to be part of the discussions and decision-making, here, in Paris, and beyond. Our time tested knowledge about living in harmony with the natural world is needed now more than ever. If our rights are respected, we are willing to share some of this knowledge with you, for the sake of our grandchildren's lives and yours. Please take a moment to consider what is really at stake in the decisions you will be making. For all our relations, let us move forward together in partnership and mutual respect and with a full understanding of what is now hanging in the balance.

Thank you.

¹ See FCCC/SB/2015/INF.1, p.15